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cons „Im Vaterland“, Lamberts „Alltägliches“ und Moshers „Willkommen in Deutschland“ zu untersuchen. Ich nahm wieder den Durchschnitt von zehn aufs Geratewohl gewählten Seiten und kam zu folgenden Resultaten: Im Vaterland, 3080 Wörter (77 Seiten mit 40 Wörtern—Durchschnitt 43,9); Alltägliches, 4230 Wörter (94 Seiten mit 45 Wörtern—Durchschnitt 47,5); Willkommen in Deutschland, 2610 Wörter (58 Seiten mit 45 Wörtern—Durchschnitt 49,1).

Es erhellt daraus, dass diese Bücher mit ihren allzu ausgedehnten Vokabularen nicht völlig gelungen sind. Mir scheint, wir sollten ein Lesebuch haben, das wirklich für Anfänger geschaffen wäre, dessen Vokabulare nicht mehr als 750—1000 Wörter enthalten sollte. Damit wäre dem Anfänger ein brauchbarer Wortschatz geboten, womit er im täglichen Leben auch durchkommen könnte. Deswegen brauchte der Text auch nicht weniger interessant zu sein. Natürlich sollte der Aufsatzunterricht diesen Wortschatz zur Basis nehmen. Es muss doch grundfalsch sein, dass der Schüler einen Wortschatz im Aufsatzbuch und einen andern im zu übersetzenden Texte hat. Dabei lernt er herzlich wenig. Das sehe ich aus meinen Klassen. Wir sollen so weit wie möglich dem Anfänger die gleiche Gelegenheit bieten, welche das deutsche Kind hat, d. h. mit wenigen Wörtern anfangen und diese alle aus einem einheitlichen Kreis, nicht teils Münchener Ausdrücke, teils Leipziger und teils Berliner oder sonst was. Wenn der Schüler im ersten Jahre diesen engen, elementaren Wortschatz zum grössten Teil gelernt hat, dann könnten im zweiten Jahre noch andere Wörter allmählich hinzugefügt werden, nicht jedoch gleich zu Tausenden!

Überall suchen wir die Lösung des Problems, „wie sollen wir Deutsch lehren?“ Vielleicht findet man in dieser notwendigerweise knapp gefassten Erörterung etwas zum Nachdenken.

Shall We Teach German in the Elementary Schools?*

By Wm. H. Haussmann, Ph. D., Central High School, Philadelphia.

Doubtless you are aware of the fact that our fellow-citizens of German extraction are, at the present moment, very much interested in a problem which concerns us as much as it does them, and to which we are, therefore, in duty bound to give our immediate and most earnest consideration. Their contention is that, compared with some of the other large cities of the Union—as, for instance, New York, Chicago, Cleveland, and Milwaukee—the City of Philadelphia is lamentably behindhand in that

* Paper read before the Teachers' Association of Philadelphia.

she does not afford her sons and daughters the opportunity of thoroughly mastering at least one representative modern language. Our high schools and manual training high schools, with their language courses extending over a period of four years at best and two years at worst, are utterly unequal to the task of thoroughly teaching either German, French or Spanish; the percentage of our boys and girls to whose lot falls the boon of a supplementary college education is evanescently small; our City College, with its projected six-year course, has—be it said to Philadelphia's shame—as yet not even reached the embryonic stage. Even if we had our college, however, the significant fact would still remain that the study of a modern language should be begun not by the high school boy or girl who has reached the age of 14, but at the much earlier age of 10 or 11, certainly not beyond the age of 12. The earlier the better. In short, there is no evading the issue: the study of a modern language belongs in part to the elementary school. I certainly do most heartily concur in the view advanced by my friend, Prof. H. M. Ferren, of the Allegheny High School: "The first step will consist in enabling our youth, not merely in a few large cities, but all over the land, to begin a second representative modern language at such an early age that they may become imbued with its literary spirit and may make its masterpieces part of their own flesh and blood. The prevailing custom of beginning all foreign languages in our secondary schools is based upon the irrational assumption that knowledge can be compressed and cut and piled up indiscriminately like so many bales of hay. Under this arrangement the time devoted to modern language study is so short and the number of participants so limited that it can be nothing else than an imaginary quantity in our public education."

Nor is there any such thing as combating this view by force of argument. To urge that the complete mastery of a foreign language is possible only at the expense of intimate familiarity with the beauties and subtleties of one's vernacular is to ignore the counter-declaration of the most eminent educators. To take a concrete case: Goethe had never been Goethe had he confined his efforts to a single tongue. And here, at any rate, statistical evidence does count for something. Who will make bold to say that the bi-lingual graduate of a New York high school is even by reason of his being bi-lingual a less proficient user of his English mother-speech than his mono-lingual fellow-graduate of a Philadelphia sister institution? No, if the child be fairly gifted, the study of a foreign language will be a help and not a hindrance to the thorough acquisition of his native tongue. This argument, then, and others like it, may be forthwith cashiered as unwarranted by fact and as being indeed but little more than the offspring of a very needless concernment on the part of our super-apprehensive patriots.

The one and only argument which can be urged against the procedure of adding the study of a modern language to the curriculum of our elementary school partakes of a purely negative character. But, albeit negative, it is precisely this argument which may eventually prove the rock of wreckage for an undeniably worthy cause. Condensed into a question it reads: Where get the needful number of efficient language-teachers? I, for my part, acknowledge that I should not exactly relish being charged with the task of manning or womaning (*venia sit verbo*) all our many public schools with thoroughly competent language-teachers. I fear I could not do it even with the help of Diogenic lanterns. Am I wrong, or are we placed between the Scylla of maintaining an undesirable *status quo* and the Charybdis of a possibly forthcoming halfness? It is the dread of running into the clutches of Charybdis which has thus far prevented me from laying this matter before the public, although it has been lying heavy on my mind ever since, at the beginning of this century, I came on from the City of Allegheny in order to take hold of the work of teaching German in our Department of Commerce. If I am too pessimistic, so much the better. I hope I shall be understood: far from me lies any such intention as that of seeking to forestall the judgment of the Association; on the contrary, acting in the capacity of the Central High School's representative in the Subject of Modern Languages, to which office Dr. Thompson and our departmental heads have seen fit to appoint me, I simply beg leave to address myself to you with a view to bringing on discussion, and, above all, with the expectation of being enlightened and encouraged.

The second contention which our German-American fellow-citizens make would seem to be even more unassailable than the first. It is to the effect that of all foreign languages it is the German which is entitled to consideration when it comes to extending our language courses in a downward direction. Aside from its being the language of an industrially not less than politically great and powerful nation, aside from its being the language of a people with which we are likely to have dealings in the course of many centuries to come—a people now asserting itself and extending its intellectual as well as its material sway far beyond its narrow geographic pale, aside from its being the language of a people which has infused into our nation blood as healthy as that which has afflued to it from any other source, aside from its being along with French and English—and at this moment in a far greater degree, perhaps, than either—the language of science, aside from its being the language of a not considerable number of the world's greatest thinkers and poets,—the German language may lay claim to being emphatically the most representative of all modern tongues, our English not excepted. It, of all others, is the key to “the world's best thought.” “The German language,” so that

broadest and fairest of all critics—Goethe—tells us, “is a fundamentally noble language (*eine im tiefsten Grunde edle Sprache*)” and “being as it is the mediatrix between the old time and the new, foreign nations are henceforth in duty bound highly to esteem this language.” And, again, this same Goethe, addressing himself in especial to the English speaking peoples, sets forth the one peculiar virtue of the German language in the following most flattering tribute: “For fifty years I have been busy with the English language and literature. But, as I said before, your young men do well to come to us and learn our language; for, not only does our literature merit attention on its own account, but no one can deny that he who knows German well can dispense with many other languages. Of the French I do not speak; it is the language of conversation and indispensable in travelling because everybody understands it, and in all countries we can get on with it instead of a good interpreter. *But as for Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish,* we can read the best works of these nations *in such excellent translations* that, unless we have some particular object in view, we need not spend much time upon the toilsome study of these languages. It is in the German nature duly to honor after its kind, everything produced by other nations, and to accommodate itself to foreign peculiarities. This, with the great flexibility of our language makes German translations thoroughly faithful and complete.” And our own American Lowell, whom no one will accuse of having been inordinately fond of the Germans, is obliged to concede that “German is the *open sesame* to a large culture, for it is the language of all others most pliable for the translation of other tongues, and everything has been rendered into it.” So, too, the American grammarian Marsh, whose Germanophagistic propensities were if anything even more pronounced than those of Lowell, is (in his “Lectures on the English Language”) simply compelled to render honor to the truth by saying that “German is singularly homogeneous and consistent in its vocabulary and its structure, and the desire to strengthen and maintain its oneness of character is extremely natural with those to whom it is a vernacular. The essential unity of its speech gives its study immense value as both a philological and an intellectual discipline, and it has powerfully contributed to the eminently national and original character of a literature, which, for a century, has done more to widen the sphere of human knowledge, and elevate the habitual range of human thought, than the learning and intellect of all the world besides.” And, finally, the Hungarian Count Apponyi, who is now sojourning in our land and conspicuously before the American public as one of the most eloquent as well as eminent interpreters of the movement toward universal peace, gives the following reason for the study of German: “The German spirit is the universal spirit among the spirits that have been given to the peoples. Where a man, some day, to fall from the moon and ask me what

language he should learn in order to apprehend the cultural life of mankind upon our planet, I should unconditionally recommend to him the study of the German language. For, the study of any other language would enable him to survey a more or less extended, at all events, however, limited field. A knowledge of the German language would, of itself, convey to him a knowledge of the entire culture, of the culture of all the nations now still living." I might go on in this strain. But this is not my object. All I wish to indicate and emphasize is that our German-American fellow-citizens are amply justified in pressing the claims of German as against the claims of any other language, living or dead.

Let us formulate the situation. Provided thoroughness of instruction can be guaranteed, it is desirable, nay, imperative, that a modern language, preferably German, be added to the curriculum of study in our lower schools. Regardless of the cost which it entails, we owe it to the community that such a step be taken.

Berichte und Notizen.

I. Korrespondenzen.

Milwaukee.

Der Monat Oktober, der ganz gegen seine Gewohnheit die schönen, klaren Herbsttage diesmal nicht gebracht hat, lieferte einige sehr willkommene und interessante Abwechslungen. Herr Rudolf Cronau, der sich als deutsch-amerikanischer Geschichtsschreiber einen beneidenswerten Namen erworben hat, berührte, auf einer längeren Vortrags-tour begriffen, auch unsere Stadt und hielt im deutschen Theater vor einem sehr zahlreich erschienenen, dankbaren Publikum unter den Auspizien des Stadtverbandes Milwaukee, eines Zweiges des Nationalbundes, einen sehr lehrreichen, wunderbar kondensierten Vortrag über das alte und das neue Deutschland. Es gelang ihm, innerhalb einer guten Stunde die Entwicklung des deutschen Volkes auf den verschiedensten Gebieten darzustellen und den Zuhörern die Tatsache nahe zu legen, dass das alte Vaterland im Konzerte der Nationen die erste Geige spielt.

Dem eigentlichen Vortrage folgten ungefähr zweihundert prachtvolle Lichtbilder, welche die aufgestellten Behauptungen treffend illustrierten und einzelne besonders anziehende Punkte Deutschlands ins hellste Licht rückten. Der

Männerchor des Musikvereins erfreute die Zuhörer durch den Vortrag von zwei Liedern.

Am 21. Oktober ereignete sich etwas, das nicht so leicht vergessen werden dürfte. Am Abend jenes Tages versammelte sich die gesamte Lehrerschaft der Stadt im Auditorium zu einem glänzenden Bankett, das veranstaltet wurde, um unserem beliebten Schulsuperintendenten, Herrn Carroll G. Pearse, wegen seiner Wahl zum Präsidenten der grössten Lehrervereinigung des Landes, der N. E. A., die wohlverdiente Anerkennung zu zollen. Der ungeheure Saal war einfach, aber geschmackvoll dekoriert. Fünfzehnhundert Lehrer und Lehrerinnen sassen schmausend an langen Tischen, während weiss gekleidete Schülerinnen der oberen Grade als Aufwärtinnen fungierten. Dem Bankett folgten die üblichen Ansprachen, die die Verdienste des Ehrengastes gebührend erwähnten, und als man sich von den Tischen erhob, war es nahezu zwölf Uhr geworden.

In diesen Monat fiel auch die erste deutsche Lehrerversammlung, die in angenehmer, harmonischer Weise verlief. Bei dieser Gelegenheit